

Inquiries of the Ministry

INQUIRY AS TO APPOINTMENT OF
QUEEN'S PRINTER

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Azellus Denis (St. Denis): Mr. Speaker, may I ask a question of the Prime Minister. Has the Prime Minister put on the government agenda the nomination of the Queen's printer before the end of the session?

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to see that the hon. member has now widened his field of operations, and I will just let him in on a secret. The answer is in the affirmative.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

NATO—REPORTED PROPOSAL FOR SUMMIT
CONFERENCE OF MEMBERS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): May I ask the Prime Minister whether he will confirm or otherwise a report in this morning's press that the secretary general of NATO is coming to Ottawa to discuss with the Prime Minister a proposed summit conference of NATO members?

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): I noticed that report, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Spaak is coming to Ottawa to discuss in general problems in connection with NATO, a system of consultation which the hon. member knows was a regular course during the days he occupied the position of secretary of state for external affairs and which has been extended in the last couple of years under this administration. He comes here for the purpose of discussing those matters which are of interest to the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. In the course of those discussions I am sure there will be references and representations regarding the extension of the field of consultation. I shall certainly bring to his attention what I believe is the need, preceded by the necessary and complete discussion among the experts and the officials, for a NATO meeting of heads of state.

REPORTED CLOSING OF DEPARTMENTAL
PRESS OFFICE

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier): I wish to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Can the minister confirm the report appearing in this morning's *Globe and Mail* to the effect that the press office in the Department of External Affairs has been closed? If so, what arrangements, if any, are being made to take over the duties formerly provided by this office?

[Mr. Hamilton (Notre Dame de Grace).]

Hon. Howard C. Green (Secretary of State for External Affairs): There has been a minor adjustment in this branch of the department, but that adjustment makes no change in the furnishing of information.

Mr. Chevrier: I have a supplementary question. The report indicates that Mr. Arthur Blanchette will no longer be authorized to answer reporters' inquiries, and that henceforth reporters' questions will be answered by the offices of external affairs minister Howard Green and Prime Minister John Diefenbaker. The supplementary question is this. Are these two offices being linked together in so far as this press bureau is concerned?

Mr. Green: That does not mean any real change. Statements with regard to policy have not been made by this office for a long time.

DISARMAMENT—STATEMENTS RESPECTING POSITION OF WESTERN GROUP

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Paul Martin (Essex East): I should like to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the statement attributed to General Burns, as reported in the *New York Times* on Sunday last, and also the statement attributed to Mr. Moch, the delegate for France, yesterday in the session of the disarmament conference, that no member of the western group would take an independent position in the matter of disarmament, would the minister make a statement regarding those observations and more particularly on the discussions at the disarmament conference itself?

Hon. Howard C. Green (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Perhaps that matter could be best dealt with tomorrow when we are dealing with the correspondence which was tabled today.

AGRICULTURE

DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS—MEETING WITH
WESTERN FARM ORGANIZATIONS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia): I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Can the Prime Minister inform the house what progress has been made in arranging a meeting between the government and the liaison committee of western farm organizations to discuss western farm income deficiency?

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): I think the question would be more appropriately answered by the Minister of Agriculture.